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SONIC™

THE HEDGEHOG



SEGA®

THE HEDGEHOG | 280



PEPPERS & DUSKIN
HUNZIKER

Welcome to Sonic's comic book adventures—a world unique & beyond what you know from the SEGA games! Where Sonic and his friends work to save the world from the forces of evil!



**CHARACTER
= SELECT =**



**SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG**
COOL BLUE HERO!



**MILES
"TAILS" PROWER**
SONIC'S BEST BUDDY



CHIP
AMNESIA-STRICKEN SPIRIT



**AXEL THE
WATER BUFFALO**
HIGH-OCTANE EGG BOSS!



???

SONIC™

THE HEDGEHOG

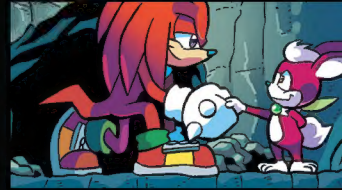
PREVIOUSLY...

FAMILY GAIA!

Chip is the Light Gaia—the spirit meant to restore the shattered world! Or that's what everyone tells him. The poor little guy has had a difficult time remembering who he is and exactly what kind of power he holds!

But that hasn't stopped him from joining Sonic and his band of Freedom Fighters as they travel the fractured globe seeking out the Gaia Temples needed to fix their broken planet! One such temple resides in Mazuri, a beautiful town full of exotic wonders.

Unfortunately for Sonic and Chip, one of Eggman's cronies is also stationed here, and he's packing some serious fire power...



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HOLY TREE, SAVANNAH
CITADEL ZONE...

HAHA! I'M
GOOD FOR A
FEW MORE LAPS.
HOW ABOUT
YOU GUYS?

I DON'T CARE HOW
FAST THEY SAY YOU
ARE! YOU RACE MY
CREW--YOU WIND UP
IN A DITCH!

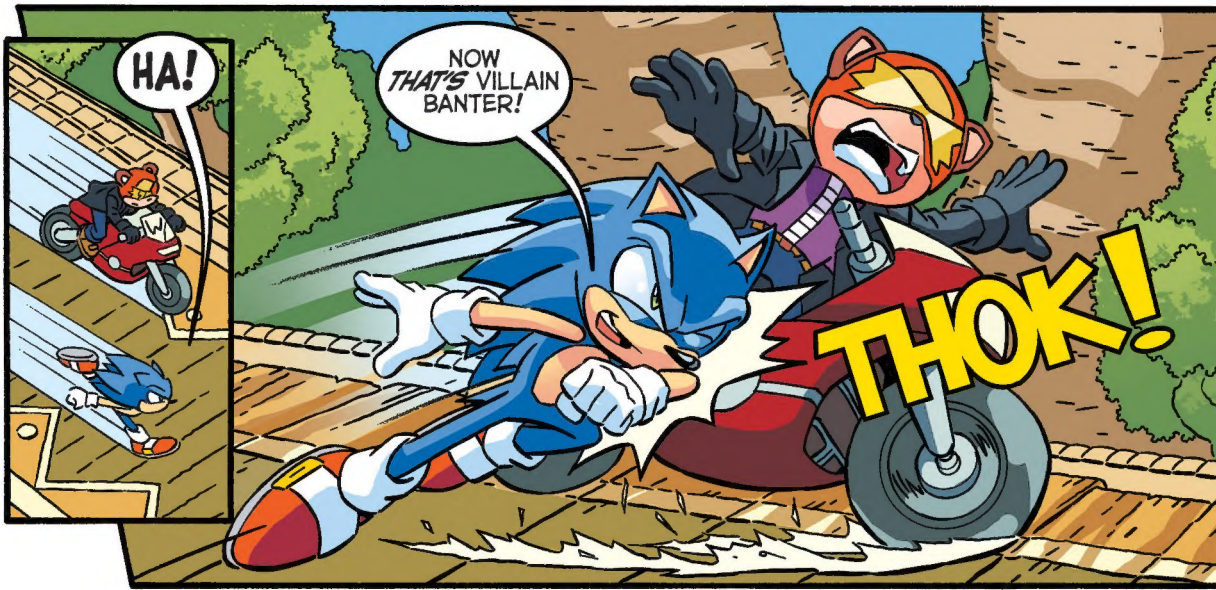
AXEL
REGIONAL
EGG BOSS

SONIC
FASTEST
THING
ALIVE

Keys to VICTORY

WRITER: IAN FLYNN • PENCILS: JAMAL PEPPERS • INKS: TERRY AUSTIN • COLORS: GABRIEL CASSATA
LETTERS: JOHN WORKMAN • COVER BY PEPPERS, AUSTIN AND BEN HUNZAKER
ALTERED BEAST VARIANT BY ERIK LY

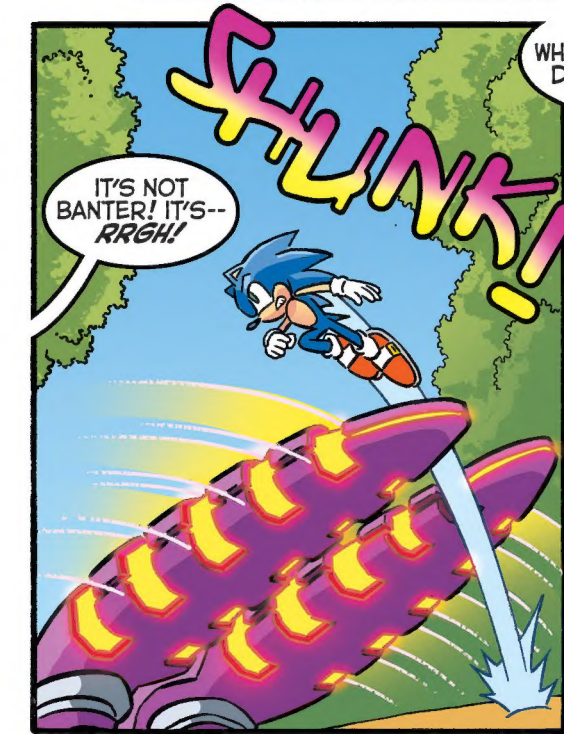
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SPECIAL THANKS TO SANDRA JO AND MAI KIYOTAKI AT SEGA LICENSING.



HA!

NOW THAT'S VILLAIN BANTER!

THOK!



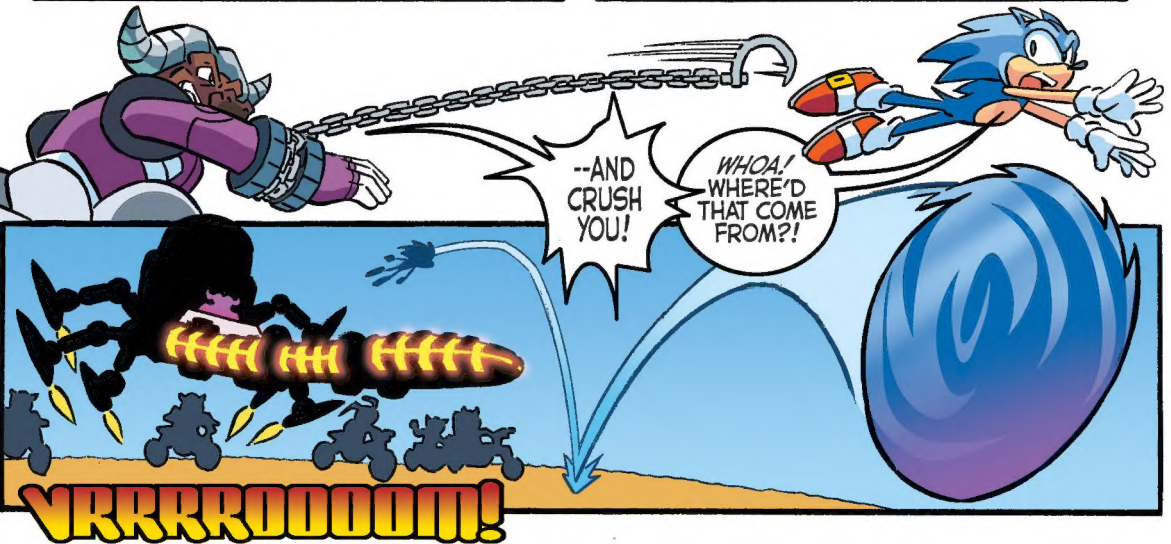
IT'S NOT BANTER! IT'S--
RRGH!

SHUNK!

I SEE NOW WHY YOU DRIVE THE DOCTOR CRAZY!

SPEAKING OF "DRIVING," DOES EGGMAN KNOW YOU'RE TAKING ONE OF HIS MACHINES OUT FOR A SPIN?

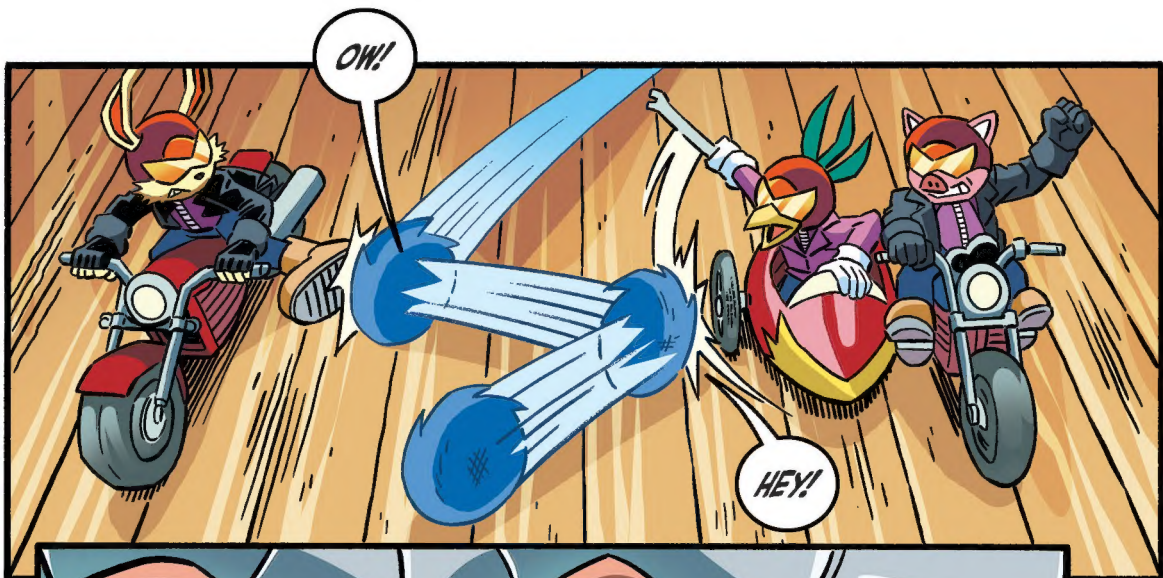
I'VE GOT CLEARANCE TO USE WHATEVER IT TAKES TO DEFEND THAT TEMPLE--



--AND CRUSH YOU!

WHOA! WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!

VRRRRROOOOM!

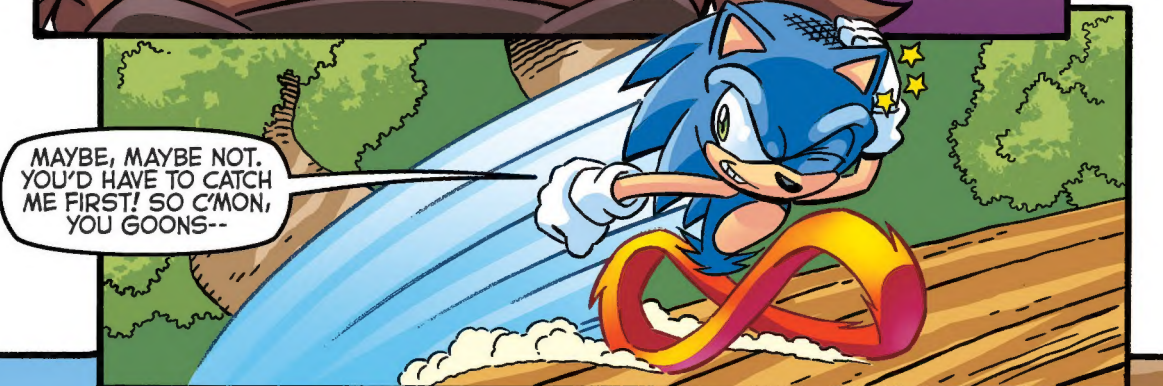


OW!

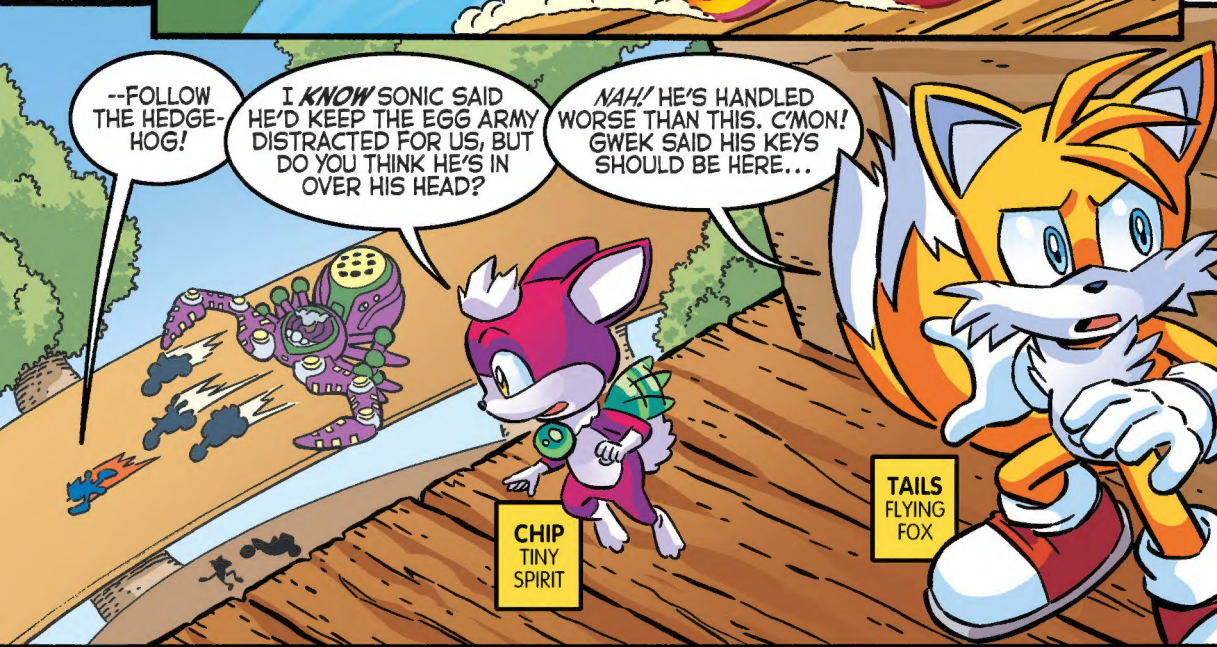
HEY!



YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE COME ALONE, HEDGEHOG. I'M TOUGH, BUT MY CREW MAKES ME **STRONGER**. YOUR OVERCONFIDENCE IS GONNA GET YOU KILLED.



MAYBE, MAYBE NOT. YOU'D HAVE TO CATCH ME FIRST! SO C'MON, YOU GOONS--



--FOLLOW THE HEDGEHOG!

I **KNOW** SONIC SAID HE'D KEEP THE EGG ARMY DISTRACTED FOR US, BUT DO YOU THINK HE'S IN OVER HIS HEAD?

NAH! HE'S HANDLED WORSE THAN THIS. C'MON! GWEK SAID HIS KEYS SHOULD BE HERE...

CHIP
TINY
SPIRIT

TAILS
FLYING
FOX

EARLIER, JUST OUTSIDE MAZURI...

I'D HAPPILY GIVE YOU THE GAIA KEYS, BUT THEY WERE STOLEN BY THE EGG ARMY IN A RAID. THEY'RE PROBABLY STASHED IN THE GAIA TEMPLE THEY TOOK OVER, ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE THEY'VE STOLEN.

DO THEY HARASS YOU A LOT?

THOSE MARAUDERS HARASS THE WHOLE *CONTINENT!* THEY ONLY GOT BOLDER WHEN THEY SIGNED ON WITH EGGMAN.

IF THEY'VE GOT THE KEYS *AND* THE TEMPLE, IT MEANS EGGMAN FIGURED OUT HOW TO USE THEM ALL!

NOT NECESSARILY. THE EGG ARMY HAS BEEN OCCUPYING EVERY TEMPLE AND RUIN THEY CAN FIND. I THINK THEIR OCCUPATION OF THE HOLY TREE IS A COINCIDENCE.

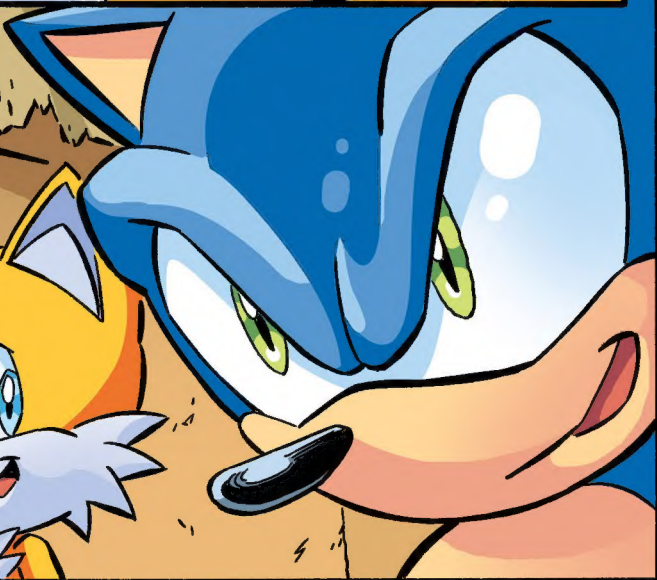
LOOKS LIKE THOSE DECOY TEMPLES LUPE TOLD US ABOUT ARE EVERYWHERE.* BUT IT WON'T TAKE THEM LONG TO FIGURE THINGS OUT!

RIGHT. WE NEED TO GET IN, GRAB THE KEYS, AND GET OUT WITHOUT TIPPING THEM OFF THAT THE KEYS ARE IMPORTANT.

*STH #277.

LUCKILY, I'VE GOT A PLAN.

UH-OH...



NOW--INSIDE
THE GAIA
TEMPLE...

LEAVE IT TO SONIC
TO COME UP WITH THE
PLAN "RUN FACE-FIRST
INTO DANGER!"

HAHA! YEAH,
BUT HE ALWAYS
MAKES IT WORK.

AND WHILE HE
KEEPS THE EGG
ARMY BUSY...

GET TO THE
GARAGE! AXEL
SAYS HE NEEDS
MORE WHEELS
ON THE ROAD!

MORE?! HOW
MANY OF US DID
SONIC TAKE DOWN
ALREADY?!

AS I WAS
SAYING--WHILE HE
KEEPS THEM BUSY,
WE CAN FIND THE
GAIA KEYS.

YOU AND SONIC
REALLY HAVE A
SPECIAL BOND,
DON'T YOU?

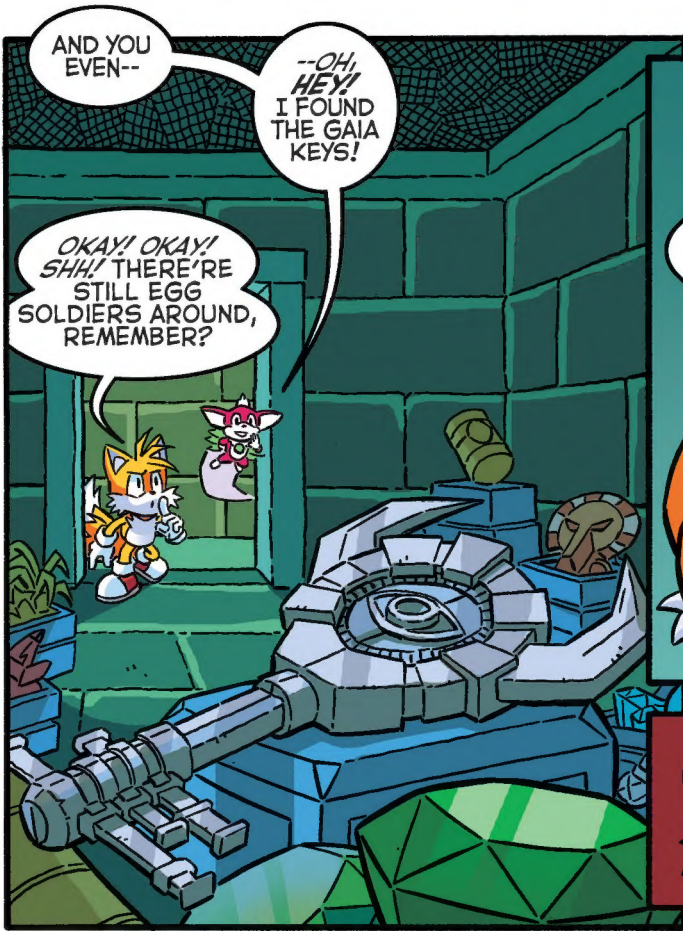
YEAH, HE'S LIKE
A BIG BROTHER
TO ME. HE
INSPIRED ME IN
SO MANY WAYS.
TO BE MYSELF.
TO BE A HERO. I
WOULDN'T BE WHO
I AM TODAY IF
NOT FOR HIM.

I'LL ADMIT IT--
I'M JEALOUS! I
WISH I HAD A
LIFELONG FRIEND
LIKE THAT!

HAHA! WELL,
THAT'S THE THING
ABOUT SONIC. HE
TREATS US ALL
LIKE WE'VE ALWAYS
BEEN THE MOST
IMPORTANT
PEOPLE IN HIS
LIFE.

IT'S NOT JUST HIM. YOU AND ALL THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS HAVE MADE ME FEEL WELCOME. I'M NOT JUST A LEGENDARY SPIRIT TO YOU. I'M YOUR *FRIEND*.





AND YOU EVEN--

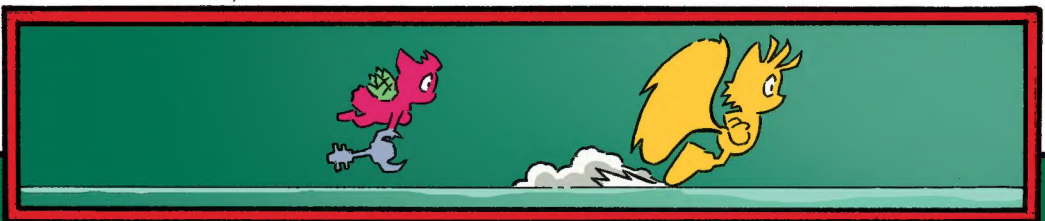
--OH, HEY!
I FOUND THE GAIA KEYS!

OKAY! OKAY!
SHH! THERE'RE STILL EGG SOLDIERS AROUND, REMEMBER?

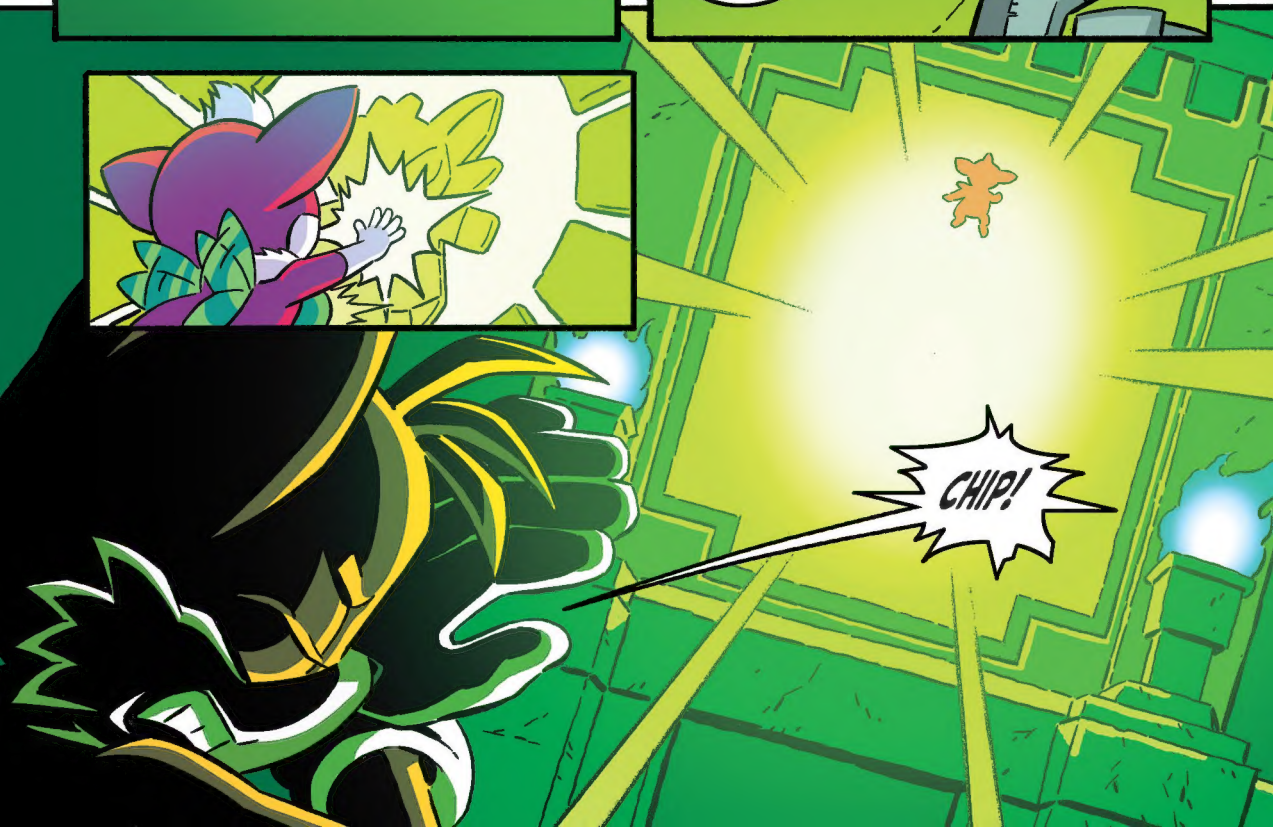
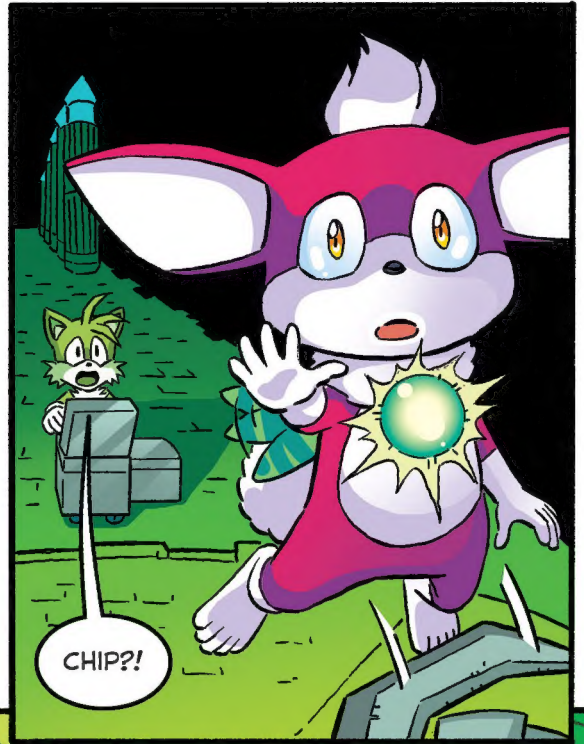
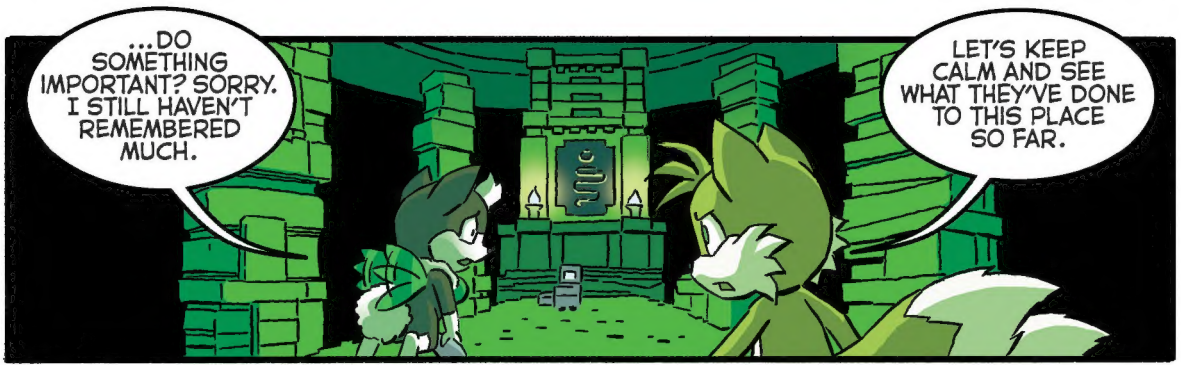


IT LOOKS LIKE THEY MANAGED TO PUT THEM TOGETHER.

I HOPE THEY DIDN'T TEST IT ON ANY OF THE DOORS IN HERE...



OH, NO! THEY'VE GOTTEN ACCESS TO THE CENTRAL CHAMBER! THAT'S WHERE I... UM...





I
welcome
your
return...

...messenger
of day, of
light, of
rebirth.



W-WHO
ARE YOU?
**WHAT ARE
YOU?**

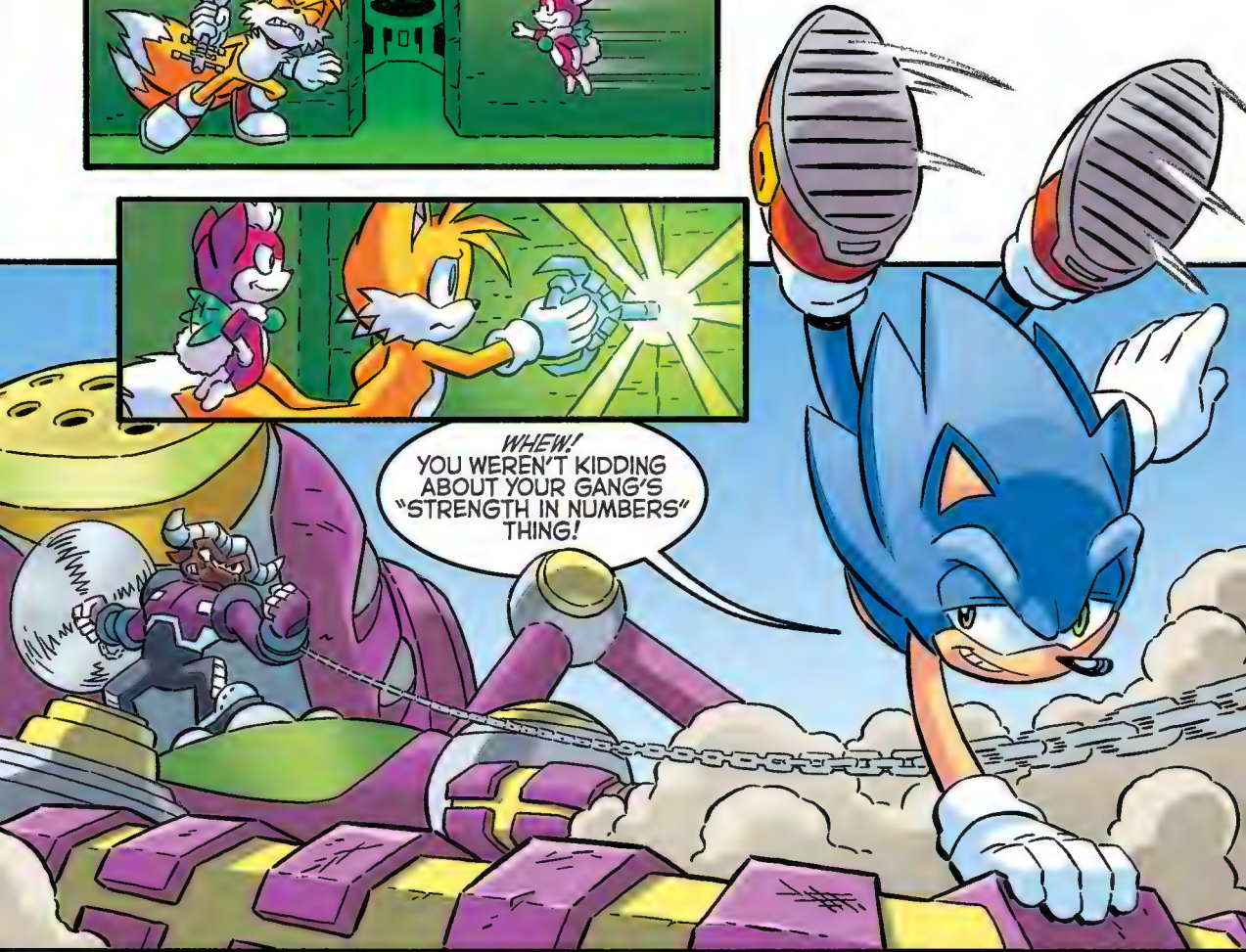
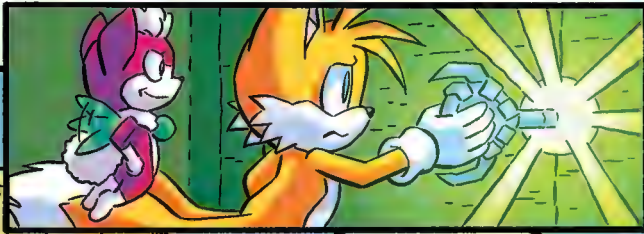
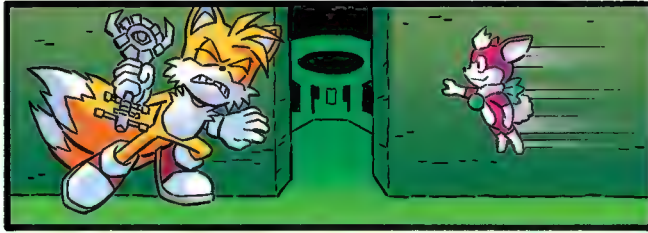
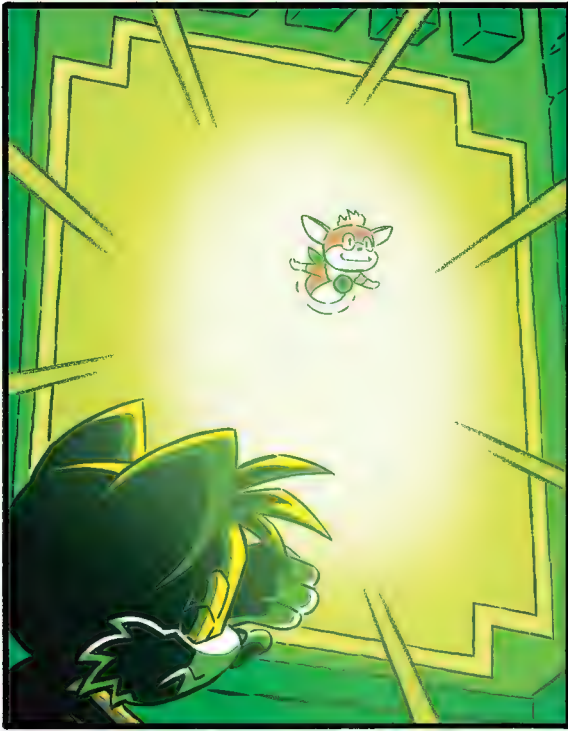


I am the
first spark.
The last
light.

You were once
one of mine, when
the Chaos Titans drove
back the darkness.
But you all suffered
for it. You were
all changed.

I return
to you now
all that I can.
Restore
the world,
Light
Gaia.







IN FACT--I'M GONNA QUIT WHILE I'M AHEAD.

YOU'RE... RETREATING ?!

YUP! TOODLES!

BREAK OUT THE GOOD STUFF, BROTHERS AND SISTERS! WE JUST DID THE IMPOSSIBLE!

WE DROVE OFF SONIC THE HEDGEHOG!



»IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE!«



THAT'S ONE MORE GAI A KEY FOR SONIC, AND ONE STEP CLOSER TO SAVING THE WORLD! THE ADVENTURES CONTINUE IN THIS ISSUE, IN THE PAGES OF SONIC UNIVERSE AND THROUGHOUT THE GRAPHIC NOVEL LIBRARY!

PROFESSOR PICKLE'S
OFFICE, SPAGONIA
UNIVERSITY...

THERE
YOU ARE--
MY MOON
KEY.

THANK
YOU, SIR!

PROFESSOR
PICKLE
HISTORIAN &
ARCHAEOLOGIST

A SPECIAL OCCASION

WRITER:
IAN FLYNN
PENCILS: JENNIFER
HERNANDEZ
INKS: TERRY AUSTIN
COLORS:
GABRIEL CASSATA
LETTERS: JOHN
WORKMAN

ROTOR THE
WALRUS
BATTLE
MECHANIC

OTTO
LANDLORD OF
STUDENT
APARTMENTS
(AND KEY
GUARDIAN!)

MY PLEASURE!

SALLY
ACORN
PRINCESS &
TACTICIAN

THIS MAKES
THREE-AND-A-
HALF KEYS!
WE'RE HALF-
WAY TO
ACCESSING
ALL THE
TEMPLES AND
SAVING THE
WORLD!

AND IT'LL
BE *FOUR-*
AND-A-HALF
WHEN SONIC
GETS BACK!



BUT LET'S MAKE IT AN "EVEN" FIVE. WHERE IS--?

I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE MY FRIEND, OTTO. *FORTY YEARS* I'VE BEEN UNRAVELING THE MYSTERIES OF THE GAIA MANUSCRIPTS...

UH... GENTLEMEN?

I WAS *PROTECTING* IT, DILLON.

...AND YOU WERE HOLDING ONTO A RELIC ALL THIS TIME?!

PROFESSOR? MISTER--?

IT BELONGS IN A MUSEUM!

IF YOU'D JUST--

IT *BELONGS* IN THE RIGHT HANDS!

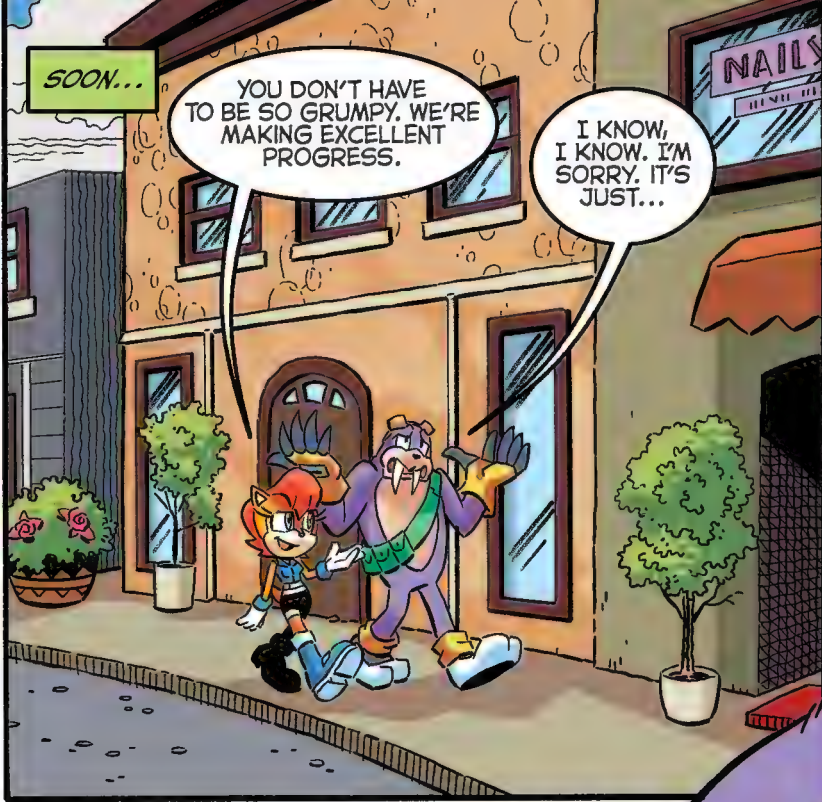


**HEY!
OLD GUYS!**

≥*AHEM*≤ PARDON ME. "FATE OF THE WORLD" AND ALL THAT COMES FIRST, OF COURSE.

I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT MY FAMILY'S LEGACY OVER CUCUMBER SANDWICHES. THE OTHER HALF OF THE KEY IS HELD BY A YOUNG LADY NAMED LUCIA. I'LL WRITE DOWN HER ADDRESS FOR YOU.

THANK YOU.



SOON...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO GRUMPY. WE'RE MAKING EXCELLENT PROGRESS.

I KNOW, I KNOW. I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST...

...EVERYONE IS **BARELY** COPING WITH THE WORLD BEING SPLIT APART. IT DRIVES ME CRAZY THAT PEOPLE ARE STILL PUTTING THEIR PERSONAL ISSUES ABOVE THE GREATER GOOD.

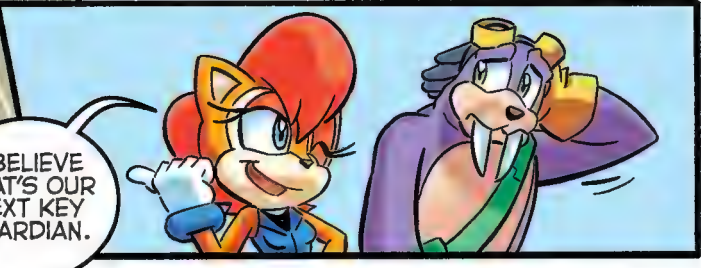


WHAT DO YOU **MEAN** WE DON'T HAVE RESERVATIONS?! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BOOK IT **WEEKS** AGO, ELIO!

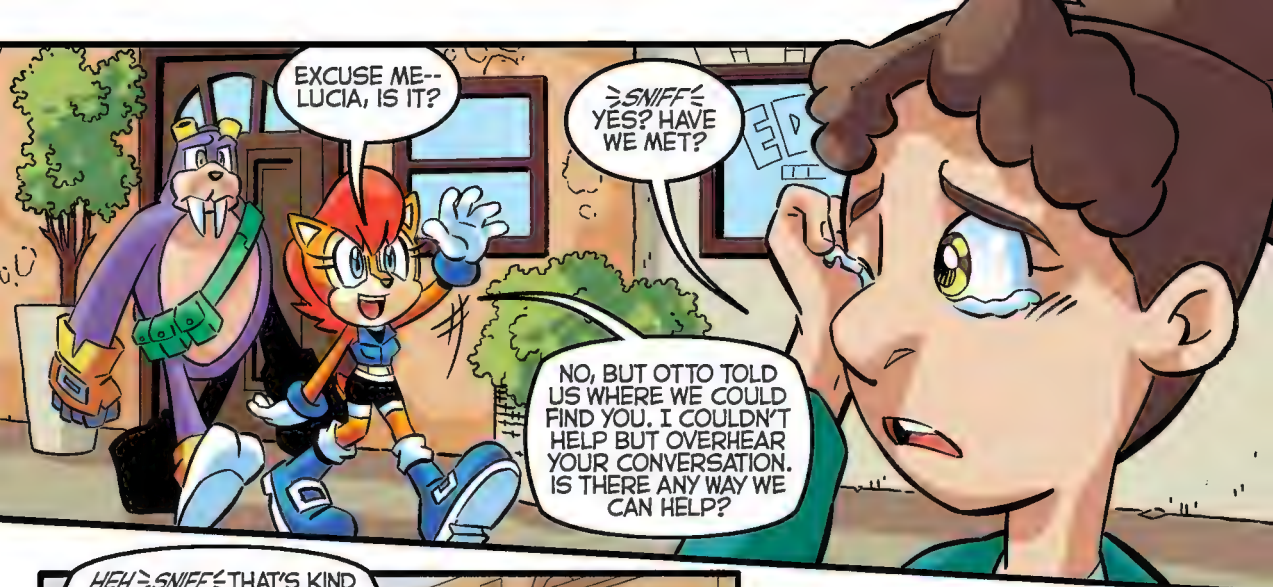
MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY IS **TONIGHT!**



SIGH NO, I HAVEN'T GOT THE RING READY. I'M SORRY, I JUST... DIDN'T HAVE THE MONEY LIKE I THOUGHT I WOULD. THIS IS A **DISASTER!**



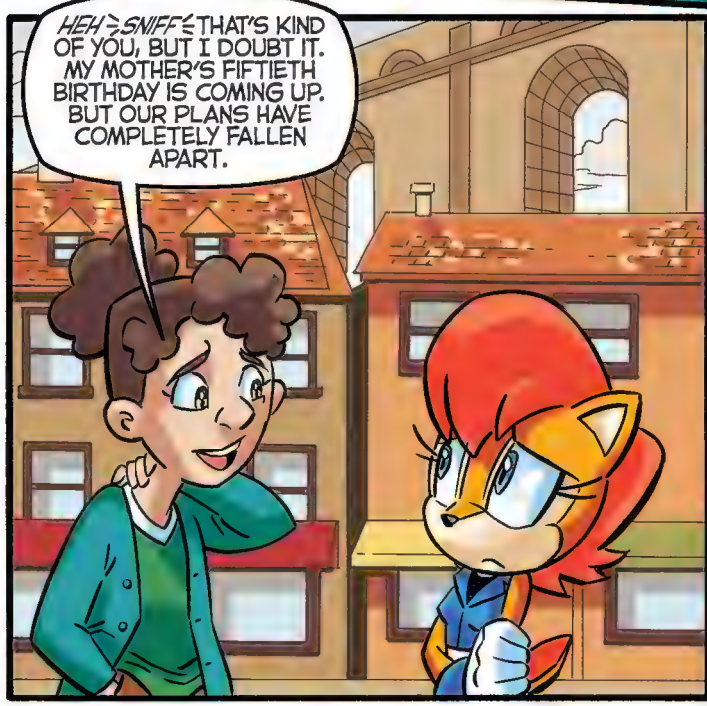
I BELIEVE THAT'S OUR NEXT KEY GUARDIAN.



EXCUSE ME--
LUCIA, IS IT?

≧SNIFF≦
YES? HAVE
WE MET?

NO, BUT OTTO TOLD
US WHERE WE COULD
FIND YOU. I COULDN'T
HELP BUT OVERHEAR
YOUR CONVERSATION.
IS THERE ANY WAY WE
CAN HELP?



HEH ≧SNIFF≦ THAT'S KIND
OF YOU, BUT I DOUBT IT.
MY MOTHER'S FIFTIETH
BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP.
BUT OUR PLANS HAVE
COMPLETELY FALLEN
APART.



THE
DAY'S
STILL
YOUNG.
WHAT
NEEDS
TO BE
DONE?

R-REALLY? WELL, UM,
I GOT HER A DIAMOND
AND RING FOR A GIFT,
BUT I COULDN'T AFFORD
TO HAVE IT SET.

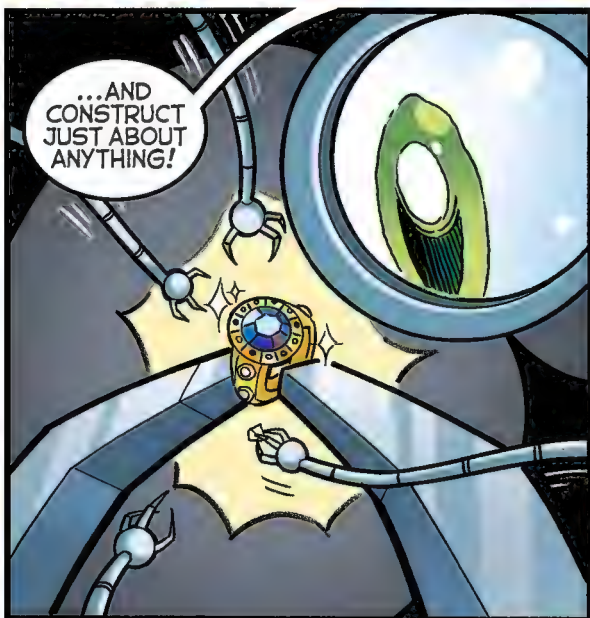
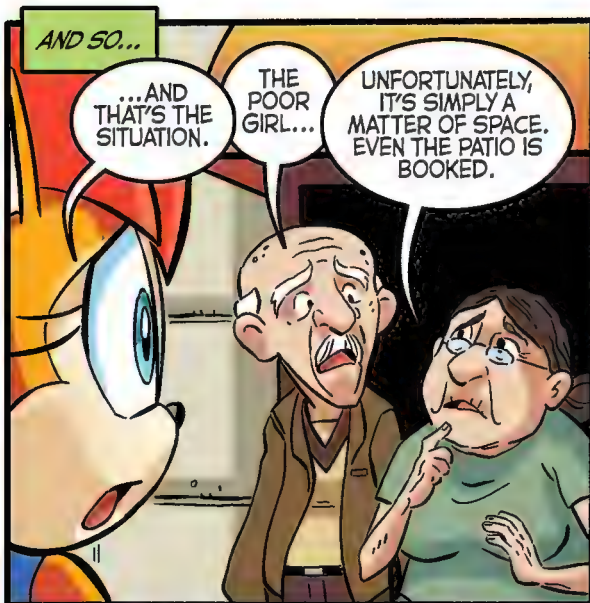
AND WE WANTED
TO HAVE RESER-
VATIONS TO THE
RESTAURANT
WHERE SHE MET
OUR FATHER,
BUT THEY'RE
BOOKED.

GIVE ME THE
ADDRESS OF THE
RESTAURANT--
I'LL HANDLE IT.
MEANWHILE, YOU
GO WITH ROTOR.
HE CAN FIX AND
BUILD *ANYTHING*.

REALLY?
THANK
YOU SO
MUCH!

I KNOW SHE'S
JUST BUTTERING
ME UP.

≧SIGH≦
BUT IT
WORKS.



LATER...

PRINCESS SALLY ACORN OF THE KINGDOM OF ACORN. PERMISSION TO COME INTO YOUR GARRISON, CAPTAIN?

CAPTAIN DANIEL MURER OF THE U.F.A.F. *SWORD OF MICHAEL*.

YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE ARE WELCOMED, YOUR HIGHNESS. WHAT BRINGS YOU TO SPAGONIA?

AN IMPORTANT DINNER PARTY, APPARENTLY.

YOU'RE **PROUD** OF THAT RING.

YEAH... WELL... **STILL...**

≡ AHEM ≡ IT'S AN EXTENDED MISSION TO DEAL WITH THE SHATTERED WORLD. BEFORE WE GET PREOCCUPIED TONIGHT, I WANTED TO SEE WHAT THE SITUATION WAS HERE WITH THE NIGHTLY MONSTER ATTACKS.

MY SHIP AND CREW HAVE JOINED HERE, SO IT'S MOSTLY SECURE. BUT OUTSIDE THE CITY IS A DIFFERENT STORY.

WE'VE HAD SO MANY REFUGEES FALL BACK BEHIND THE OLD WALLS, IT'S BEEN DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER.

AND EVERY NIGHT, MORALE DROPS NOTICEABLY. LIKE THE NIGHT IS... CRUSHING US.

BUT WE MAKE IT THROUGH THOSE DARK HOURS, KNOWING SONIC AND THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS ARE OUT THERE. WE WILL KEEP THE PEACE WHILE YOU FIX OUR PLANET.

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN. HOPEFULLY, WE WON'T KEEP YOU WAITING MUCH LONGER.

THAT NIGHT, AT RESTAURANT SWA...

O-OH, MY GOODNESS!
I MIEI BEI BAMBINI...!

THANK YOU! THIS
IS THE BEST BIRTHDAY
A MOTHER COULD
ASK FOR!

THIS
WASN'T JUST
A PERSONAL
ISSUE FOR
LUCIA. THIS
PARTY IS FOR
YOU, TOO.

HEH,
≡ SNIFF ≡
GUILTY AS
CHARGED.

I'M SORRY. I KNOW
IT'S SELFISH. BUT I
NEVER GOT A CHANCE
TO KNOW MY MOTHER.
ALL I HAVE ARE VAGUE
MEMORIES.

I WANTED LUCIA TO HAVE
THIS MOMENT WITH HER
MOTHER. SOMETHING TO
HOLD ONTO FOREVER.

≡ SNIFF ≡ NO. YOU
MADE THE RIGHT CALL.
I KEEP FORGETTING THAT
WE'RE NOT JUST FIXING A
PLANET--WE'RE SAVING
EVERYONE ON IT.

THANKS,
ROTOR.



HOW DID YOU GET A TABLE, ANYWAY?

EH-HEH-HEH... LET'S JUST SAY I'VE GOT AN INTERESTING PHONE CALL TO MAKE TO DADDY TOMORROW.



I CAN'T THANK YOU TWO ENOUGH! YOU REALLY SAVED THE DAY!

AW, WE'RE HAPPY TO DO IT! WE'RE FREEDOM FIGHTERS, AFTER ALL.

I WAS SO FRAZZLED OVER THE PLANS FOR TONIGHT...

...I NEVER THOUGHT TO ASK--WHAT DID OTTO SEND YOU TO SEE ME ABOUT?



WE'RE GATHERING THE GAIA KEYS IN A PLAN TO SAVE THE WORLD. YOU'RE THE GUARDIAN OF THE SUN KEY, RIGHT?



OHMYGOSH!





THE WORLD IS LITERALLY FALLING APART, AND I'M WORRIED ABOUT A BIRTHDAY PARTY? I'LL GO GET THE KEY RIGHT NOW!

NO-NO-NO! SIT!

WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS ALREADY--*TRUST ME*, ENJOY THIS MOMENT...

"...SO YOU CAN SAVOR IT AFTER THE WORLD IS SAVED."



THE HUNT FOR THE GAIA KEYS IS NEARLY COMPLETE!
COME BACK NEXT MONTH AS THE QUEST CONTINUES
AROUND THE GLOBE!

Letter from the EDITOR

Editorial commentary that "buffaloes" away all of its competition!

BELOW: A selection of preliminary designs and color studies for **Axel the Water Buffalo**, egg boss of the Mazuri/Efrika regions.



Hey there, Sonic fans!

The **Light Gaia** has been restored and it seems that there are only a few more **Gaia Keys** left to be found! Looks like the world will be saved in no time! YAY!!! But before that happens, let's give a hand to our artists **Jamal Peppers** and **Jennifer Hernandez** on a well-deserved return to pencilling!

That **Egg Beetle** Jamal drew is spot on. One of my favorite boss battles from *Sonic Unleashed* was the race against the Egg Beetle around the giant tree in Mazuri, so I'm very glad we got to see it depicted here! We also haven't gotten to see much of **Axel the Water Buffalo** in a while. Out of all the **Egg Bosses**, Axel has one of the most intimidating designs. Take a look at the original concept art by penciller **Ryan Jampole**!

BELOW: Character designs and headshots for **Kwami**, **Otto**, **Gwek** and **Lucia** — hub-world characters from the game *Sonic Unleashed*. Artwork by studio, **Gurihiru**.



Jen also did a great job illustrating the people and the world from **Spagonia**. She really nailed those character designs! See the reference images to the left by **Gurihiru**! See? SEE?! Jen nailed it!

Well that's all for now! See y'all next time for more Sonic fun!

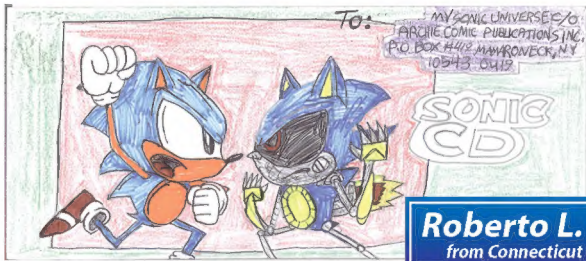
— Vincent "Vin" Lovallo
Editor

SONIC GRAMS

FAN ART



Alyanna R. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com



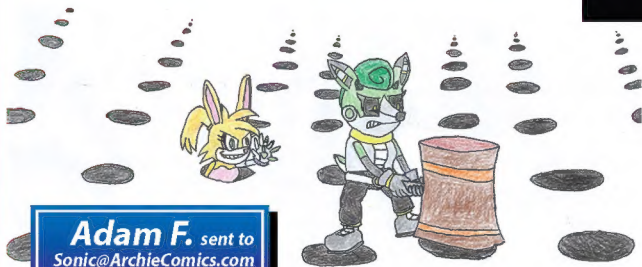
Roberto L. from Connecticut



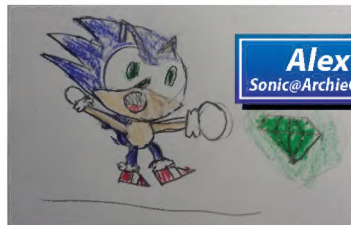
Zuri L. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com



Ben L. from Illinois



Adam F. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com



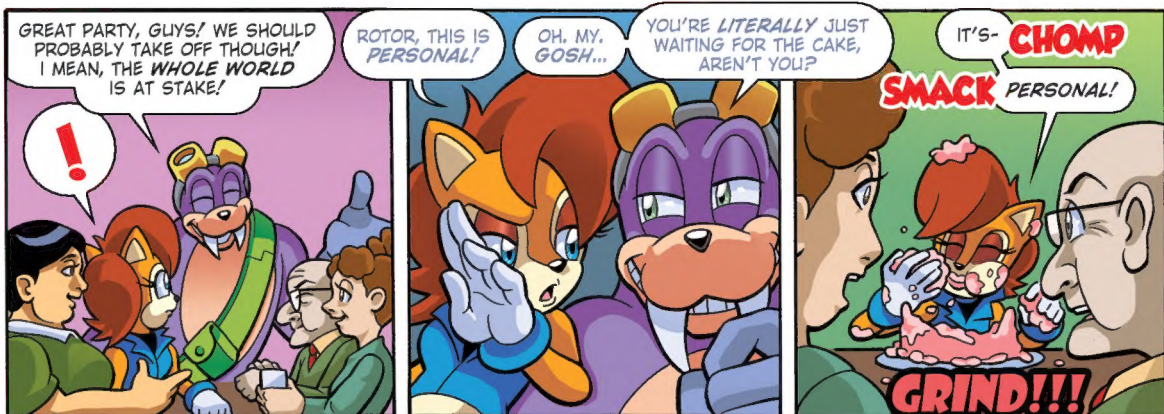
Alex P. sent to Sonic@ArchieComics.com

OFF-PANEL

THE CAKE IS A FILTHY LIE!

OR

SWEET SCREAMS





SONIC GRAMS

WRITE TO US @: SONIC GRAMS C/O ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC. 629 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 100 PELHAM, NY 10803-1242 E-MAIL: SONIC@ARCHIECOMICS.COM OR TWEET AT US USING #SONICGRAMS!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'

A lot of interesting, cool stuff is going on and I can't wait to see what will happen! I'm curious to see if any of the new Egg Bosses will be explained, especially Cassia and Clove. They look cool and it looks like they've been through a lot!

We're glad that you enjoyed them so much and hope you liked the conclusion of their story with Sally and Bunnie last issue!

Also, I'm super excited that Lupe and an all new Wolf Pack are back! They look super awesome and Lupe's back story is really cool! Are any more SatAM cartoon Freedom Fighters like Ari the Ram coming back?

We're happy to welcome Lupe back! We don't have any plans for Ari the Ram at the moment, but a lot of people have asked us if he'll have a place in the new Sonic comic universe! Hey, you never know!

Will the origins of Wendy and Walter Naugus be revealed?

You'll find out exactly what the Naugus twins are up to in "Eggman's Dazen" over in Sonic Universe #83-86! Needless to say, we've got big plans for both of our resident troll wizards in the coming story arcs...

Since you're using *Sonic Unleashed* as a backdrop for the current comics, I have to ask if we'll see Lah the Ghost Girl from SEGA's *Night of the Werehog* short make any sort of appearance?

We don't have any plans to adapt

Night of the Werehog. However, Lah will appear in a cameo on the variant cover of our very next issue!

Lastly, I loved the cameo El Gran Gordo got in the off-panel of *Sonic 270*. I was a big fan of Eggman's alter-ego from the *Sonic X* comics so that made my day! See you later and keep making great comics!

Patrick L.
from Oregon

Thanks for your enthusiastic letter, Patrick! We won't use El Gran Gordo often now that Sonic X is done. He's mostly relegated to off-panel cameos. But that doesn't mean he's been forgotten! Ole!

Dear 'Sonic Grams,'

My name is Stuart and I'm one of Sonic's biggest fans! I've been into the Sonic games, TV shows and comics and I'd like to both say and ask a few things!

1. How did Cassia end up in her current condition? I really want to know more!

Hmm... You'll have to keep reading for that! :)

2. Will Nicole ever get a boyfriend? She needs somebody to be her crush!

Stuart S.
from Georgia

Hey, we don't have to pair every character with somebody! I'M JOKING! The only person Nicole loves is her mother... board. :) Thanks for writing in, Stuart!

And with that, we'll see y'all next issue! Byyyyyee~

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